

## **SPECIAL NEEDS SCHOLARSHIP – (2008-2009)**

### **PROGRAM OVERVIEW FOR PARENT APPLICANTS**

The Special Needs Scholarship provides tuition assistance for eligible special needs students enrolled in eligible private schools. Prospective applicants may view detailed program information at <http://www.schools.utah.gov/admin/specialneeds.htm>.

#### **Student Eligibility Requirements**

1. The student's custodial parent or legal guardian must reside within the State of Utah.
2. The student must have one or more of the following disabilities: mental retardation; hearing impairment; speech or language impairment; visual impairment; serious emotional disturbance; orthopedic impairment; autism; traumatic brain injury; other health impairment; specific learning disability; or developmental delay, provided that the student is at least five years of age and less than eight years of age.
3. The student must be at least five years of age before September 2, 2008, and less than 19 years of age on the last day of the school year or, if the student has not graduated from high school, less than 22 years of age on the last day of the school year.
4. The student must meet one of these conditions: (a) the student was enrolled in a Utah public school in the 2007-2008 school year and has been admitted to an eligible private school; or (b) the student is enrolled in or has been admitted to an eligible private school designated as a "School that has Previously Served Students with Disabilities", and an assessment team has determined that the student would qualify to receive special education services if enrolled in a public school.
5. An application must be completed and submitted in the proper manner.

#### **Conditions of Acceptance**

1. When a Special Needs Scholarship is accepted, the parent assumes full financial responsibility for the education of the student. Acceptance of the Special Needs Scholarship has the same effect as a parental refusal to consent to Special Education services.
2. A student who receives the Special Needs Scholarship may not participate in a dual enrollment program in a public school including participation in extracurricular activities.
3. When a Special Needs Scholarship is accepted, a parent agrees to provide information as needed to process payments and to verify continuing student eligibility.

#### **Eligible Private Schools**

1. To receive the Special Needs Scholarship, an eligible student must be enrolled in an eligible private school.
2. Private schools become eligible by completing and submitting an application, and by meeting school eligibility requirements. A list of eligible schools can be found at <http://www.schools.utah.gov/admin/specialneeds.htm>. This list may be updated periodically as necessary. The final list of eligible schools for the 2008-2009 school year will be published to the website no later than May 30, 2008.

#### **The Special Needs Scholarship**

1. The amount of a Special Needs Scholarship awarded to an eligible student depends on the level of special education service the student would receive if enrolled in a public school.
2. The amounts for the scholarship are based upon the WPU (weighted pupil unit), the basic unit of funding for Utah public schools. Students who would have received more than 180 minutes of special education service per day if in a public school may receive Special Needs Scholarships up to 2.5 times the WPU. Students who would have received less than 180 minutes of service per day may receive Special Needs Scholarships up to 1.5 times the WPU. For the 2007-2008 school year, this was \$6,285.00 and \$3,771.00 respectively. The Special Needs Scholarship may not exceed the tuition and fees charged to parents by the private school.
3. A Special Needs Scholarship remains in force for three years, provided that the student continues to meet eligibility requirements and continues to be enrolled in an eligible private school. The Special Needs Scholarship may be extended in three-year increments if an assessment team determines that the student continues to meet the eligibility requirements.
4. The Special Needs Scholarship program is funded by annual appropriations by the Utah Legislature. Scholarships are not

guaranteed but are subject to the availability of funds.